



**FORT POLK RETIREE COUNCIL**  
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459-5302  
TELEPHONE: (337) 531-0363



IMSW-POL-HR-OR

14 February 2007

**MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD**

**SUBJECT:** Minutes of the Retiree Council Meeting, 14 February 2007

1. The Fort Polk Retiree Council met on 14 February 2007 at the Consolidated In/Out Processing, Room 172 in Building 1830. The meeting was called to order at 0900 hours by the Co-Chairman. The invocation was given by MSG (R) Clark. The Pledge of Allegiance was then led by MAJ (R) Saucier.

2. The following is the attendance record for the meeting:

Council Members:

COL (R) Ronald R. Thompson	(Present)
COL (R) Harry J. Montgomery	(Present)
LTC (R) Lessie A. Griffith	(Present)
LTC (R) Stephen C. Gibson	(Present)
MAJ (R) Charles E. Saucier	(Present)
MAJ (R) Alvie Brewer	(Present)
SMA (R) Julius W. Gates	(Present)
CSM (R) Carl C. Henderson	(Absent)
SGM (R) Anthony L. Barattini	(Present)
MSG (R) Rudolph Bourg	(Present)
MSG (R) Lathern P. Clark	(Present)
MSG (R) George Burrell	(Present)
MSG (R) Mary R. Stalnaker	(Present)
SFC (R) Dan M. Horn	(Present)
SFC (R) Lovelace Williams	(Present)
SFC (R) Stephen D. Humphries	(Present)
Mrs. Dianne H. Smith	(Absent)

Honorary Council Members Attending:

COL (R) Norman A. Keith  
COL (R) Warren S. Anderson  
COL (R) Wilson Orphe  
MAJ (R) George C. Thompson  
CSM (R) James C. Myrick  
CPO (R) Robert L. Vincent

Non-Members Attending:

COL David G. Sage, Garrison Commander, Fort Polk, LA

COL William K. Statz, BJACH Commander

CSM Jeffrey S. Hartless, Garrison Command Sergeant Major, Fort Polk, LA

Mrs. Bobbi Stark, Adjutant General, Fort Polk, LA

Mr. Michael Lanham, Fort Polk AAFES

Mr. Christopher Stevenson, TRICARE Health Care Advisor

Mrs. Barbara Watkins, Director, VA Hospital, Alexandria, LA

Mr. Roger Welch, Associate Director, VA Hospital, Alexandria, LA

Mrs. Pam Irvin, Retirement Services Officer

Ms. Alishea Rim, Contact Representative, Retirement Services

3. SFC (R) Horn opened with remarks on the remembrance of COL (R) Lary and 1SG (R) Laborde and asked for a moment of silence.

4. SFC (R) Horn introduced COL David Sage, Garrison Commander, Fort Polk, LA. COL Sage stated that COL (R) Lary will be missed from our presence in the retirement community. He spoke on the on-going construction process of the main entrance to the post. He stated that:

- The construction of the new Huddle House restaurant is under way and should be completed no later than April 2007.

- The housing area that was once the old trailer park is now called Palmetto Terrace and will be used as temporary housing for Soldiers and their families who are on travel duty or visiting from other installations.

- Renovations of the housing area are on-going.

- COL Sage asked the council members for their assistance with the outside community on concerns that affect Fort Polk. He thanked the council for their continued support.

- SFC (R) Horn thanked COL Sage for his remarks.

5. SFC (R) Horn introduced Mrs. Bobbi Stark, Directorate, Human Resources, Fort Polk, LA. Mrs. Stark stated that she appreciated being selected in this position. Mrs. Stark also stated that:

- Mrs. Linda Whittington retired in December and the new Fort Polk Casualty Affairs Officer is Mr. Steve Humphries.

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- The 32d Annual Retiree Appreciation Day will be held on 20 October 2007 and that a briefing will be conducted in the near future with COL Sage to discuss the concept and changes of the RAD.
  - In each council member's folder is a handout with information pertaining to new Department of Defense ID Card requirements which is a plan under President Bush's Homeland Security Initiative. Each retiree council member is asked to help pass this information to other retirees in their community.
  - Nominees are being accepted for a new retiree council chairman.
  - Two retiree bulletins will be published, one in May and one in September.
  - She appreciates the council members and the work that they do.
  - SFC (R) Horn thanked Mrs. Stark for her remarks to the retiree council members.
6. SFC (R) Horn introduced COL William Statz, BJACH Commander, Fort Polk, LA. COL Statz stated that:
- The Joint Commission performed a review of BJACH and a mission readiness exercise was performed. The exercise is performed every three years and the hospital received an overall positive review.
  - There is a continued push on the part of the Department of Defense to re-look the fee schedules for the pharmacy benefits and under age 65 retiree benefits.
  - A continuous construction zone is taking place throughout the hospital.
  - For those who are enrolled in Family Practice and need primary preventive care services, such as check-ups for scopes or mammograms, they should schedule appointments within the next couple of months due to a shortage of physicians during the summer months' rotations. If appointments can be moved up or put off, you would probably want to do that. However, acute care needs will be available.
  - COL Statz received questions and comments from the council members.
  - SFC (R) Horn thanked COL Statz for his remarks to the retiree council members.

7. SFC (R) Horn introduced CSM Jeffrey Hartless, Garrison Command Sergeant Major, Fort Polk, LA. CSM Hartless stated that if the retiree council members have questions concerning Fort Polk, please give him a call. CSM Hartless stated that there are currently 1, 800 Soldiers deployed between two theaters – Iraq and Afghanistan. He stated that in the next couple of weeks, 2/30th Infantry will re-deploy from Afghanistan and asked the council members to keep them in their thoughts.

- SFC (R) Horn thanked CSM Hartless for his remarks to the council members.

8. SFC (R) Horn introduced Mr. Michael Lanham, Fort Polk AAFES Director. Mr. Lanham stated that AAFES has a commitment to the community. He stated that:

- The 24 hour shoppette is complete and additional gas pumps were added.

- The Mini Mall facility will open soon with completion in mid-March 2007.

- Also in the plans, is a new shopping complex that will have five new food plan concepts, a clothing and sales facility, and a furniture store with groundbreaking taking place this year.

- Mr. Lanham received questions and comments from the council members.

- SFC (R) Horn thanked Mr. Lanham for his remarks to the council members.

9. SFC (R) Horn introduced Ms. Barbara Watkins, Director, Alexandria VA Hospital. Ms. Watkins introduced Mr. Roger Welch as the new Associate Director for the VA Hospital. She stated that:

- There has been a planned proposal for a community-based VA clinic in the Leesville/Fort Polk area for a number of years with an approved date by Washington to in 2012. There was a recent evaluation to open up various clinics and to move the date to open in 2008 or 2009. She stated that she hopes that the clinic will be in the Leesville/Fort Polk area no later than 2009. However, there has to be a business plan written and submitted to Congress for this approval.

- VA continues to receive positive feedback on the quality of care given to veterans.

- There is still a continued population increase of workload due to Hurricane Katrina because of the limitations of the New Orleans VA Hospital to include 500 to 600 more admissions dealing with mental health.

- Recently, there was a dedication of the nursing home wing at the VA hospital. There will be 40 patients moved to this wing.

- The emergency room at the VA hospital reopened as of 5 February 2007 and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- There is an active program for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans at the VA that is staffed with a counselor, office clerk, and an on-site psychologist to service their needs.

- Ms. Watkins received questions and comments from the retiree council members.

- SFC (R) Horn thanked Ms. Watkins for her remarks to the council members.

10. SFC (R) Horn asked Mr. Christopher Stevenson, the TRICARE Health Benefits Advisor, for comments. Mr. Stevenson stated that the TRICARE website address changed to [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil) and at this site is a wealth of information for retirees.

11. SFC (R) Horn discussed items of Old and Unfinished Business:

- SFC (R) Horn stated that in the flower fund there is \$227.50. He stated that active council members were given a choice to have \$25.00 contributed to an organization of the family members choice. He asked for a discussion to have funds available for not only active but honorary members of the council. COL Montgomery made a motion that the funds be made available for active and honorary members and to make a contribution on behalf of 1SG Laborde. The motion was seconded by MSG (R) Rudy Bourg and approved by all council members.

- Mr. Steve Humphries stated that widows/widowers need to be aware of the services available to them through casualty affairs. He stated that ample notification must be made to request a funeral detail to honor veterans and retirees and asked the council members to pass this information on to other retirees in their community. He also provided the council members with his contact information.

- SFC (R) Horn received questions and comments from council members.

12. SFC (R) Horn discussed items of New Business:

- SFC (R) Horn stated that the Retiree Appreciation Day will be held on 20 October 2007.

- SFC (R) Horn asked MSG (R) Bourg for information on the golf tournament that will be held on 19 October 2007.

- MSG (R) Bourg thanked COL (R) Thompson and MSG (R) Clark for their assistance with last year's tournament. MSG (R) Bourg made a challenge to the council members.

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He stated that the council member that recruits the most golf tournament attendees will receive a free dinner for two at a restaurant in Lafayette worth approximately \$75.00. He asked council members for assistance with the golf tournament and door prizes.

- SFC (R) Horn asked each council member to provide their e-mail address on the sign-in sheet.
  - The Co-Chairman asked each council member for input and comments.
  - SMA (R) Gates stated that there should be an appreciation given from the council to the Fort Polk community for the support it gives to retirees.
  - MAJ (R) Saucier stated that there should be a banner or welcome back at the airport for the Soldiers when they return from deployment.
  - Mrs. Irvin suggested that the retiree council meetings be consecutively conducted on the second Wednesday of March and September with approval from the new chairman when appointed.
  - COL (R) Montgomery suggested that the retiree council present the Fort Polk Chain of Command with a Letter of Appreciation in recognition of their continued support to the retiree council and the retired military community.
12. The Co-Chairman thanked the guest speakers, active council members, and honorary council members for attending. The meeting was adjourned.



Dan M. Horn

Sergeant First Class, USA (Retired)

Co-Chairman, Fort Polk Retiree Council

DISTRIBUTION:

1 - Each member

1 - Army Retirement Services (DAPE-RSO), ATTN: Mr. Radke, Hoffman Bldg 1, Room 1240, Alexandria, VA 22331-0470

1 - IMCOM, ATTN: Mr. Randy J. Blackburn, 2450 Stanley Rd, Suite 101, Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234-6102